

## GOVERNOR'S INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON VETERANS

### EMPLOYMENT WORKING GROUP FINAL MEETING MINUTES THURSDAY, JUNE 21, 2012

The Governor's Interagency Council on Veterans (ICV) Employment Working Group held a meeting on Monday, June 21, 2011, at the Employment Development Department, 722 Capitol Mall, Room 3098, Sacramento, CA 95814. The following Draft Minutes are not a written transcript, but a brief synopsis of the meeting. Member discussion and public comment have been paraphrased. An audio recording of the meeting is available upon request.

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER / WELCOME BY CHAIR

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Dennis Petrie, Chair, called the Employment Working Group meeting to order, welcomed attendees and addressed housekeeping items regarding meeting protocols, recording of the meeting and courtesies of cell phone use. Mr. Petrie then asked Ms. Karen Wall, ICV Staff member to take roll. The following are those members, or their representative, in attendance.

Dennis Petrie, Chair  
Keith Boylan  
Peter Cameron  
Coreena Conley  
Debbie Gregory  
Max Jones, Jr.  
Peter Cooper *for* Brian McMahon  
Moreen Lane *for* Tim Rainey  
Michelle Alford-Williams *for* Jeff Riel  
Steve Potter and Kathy Smith *for* Nancy Sanders  
Marguerite Womack  
Eric Worthen

Also in attendance for EDD are Janyce Wong and Ivan Gallardo  
The Employment Working Group meeting was called to order  
at 1:05 p.m.

## 2. APPROVAL OF JUNE 21, 2012 MEETING AGENDA AND APPROVAL OF MAY 21, 2012 DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Petrie explains to the group that as a state meeting there are processes that we are obligated to adhere to and continues by requesting approval of the June 21, 2012, Meeting Agenda followed by a request for approval of the May 21, 2012, Draft Meeting Minutes. No changes or comments were made on the agenda and it was approved as submitted. Before approving the May 21, 2012, Meeting Minutes it was noted that Mr. Peter Cameron's name was not listed as an attendee. Noting that he was in attendance at the meeting the minutes are approved as amended.

## 3. CONTINUED DISCUSSION of EMPLOYMENT WORKING GROUP'S ACTION PLAN

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Petrie began this discussion with a recap of what has taken place with the ICV in general and with the Employment Working Group in particular. He explains to those attending for the first time the process the group used to arrive at a list of four priorities and then how, after delving into those four, decided to break the list down further to end up with six priorities. Because the group wants to do a thorough job they ultimately decided to choose the top three issues to work on first. The issues (in order of discussion) are:

- Improvement of Transition Assistance Programs (TAP);
- Coherent alignment of federal, state and local programs; and
- Improved Labor Exchange

Mr. Petrie continued by elaborating on the subject of **transitional assistance programs** and how members were asked to look at both governmental and community based organization's Transitional Assistance Programs and provide feedback for discussion at this meeting. The group would be interested in what thoughts are for upgrading, changing or amending the programs. Because this challenge was not completed Ms. Wall will resend the questionnaire to the members for response and this item will be discussed further at the next meeting.

The group next discussed **coherent alignment of federal, state and local programs**. Mr. Petrie asked Mr. Keith Boylan of Swords to Plowshares and Mr. Peter Cameron of Vietnam Veterans of CA to begin this discussion by defining what is meant by coherent alignment. Mr. Cameron speaks of trying to find some coherency in all the different programs, their policies and regulations that control resources needed by all clients. He states, there are so many people wanting to help veterans and they're controlled or managed



by different federal and state entities. Within that there is a whole series of complex sets of policies and regulations that people trying to manage these have to abide by. So, there is frustration and conflict even by people at the state or federal and local level trying to work together to make it work. The initial concept is to ask 1) those people who know these specific programs best and 2) those people who best know the client's needs or veteran's family's needs and to get them together to look at systematic impediments to the efficiencies and accessibilities to those resources. From our point of view, wouldn't it be heaven if we only had to apply for one grant where could serve all the needs of a veteran (employment, health, education and housing). That would be the ideal to make it simpler and more efficient. Now within this process we need to talk about what is getting in our way, what regulatory issue, what criteria for eligibility, what timelines, whatever impedes our ability to get the resources to the clients. There are federal demands and requirements that are regulatory that are placed on the state and state passes them down and they don't necessarily really add to the effort to find that individual a job.

Mr. Cameron continues by saying he thinks it would serve us well if we look at what functions within the system that adds value to the system, that is to say, within the intent of the legislation. So let's try and make the system or elements of the system and measure it by how much value it adds to that goal. Everybody is working hard to help veterans, but we have tools that frustrate us, the system sometimes gets in the way. It is fairly simple to articulate but far greater and maybe not realistic job to do. It starts with legislation and with agencies with some flexibility to amend the existing regulations. Mr. Petrie agrees and comments that at the state, federal and maybe the local governmental level, service delivery is piecemeal. There is a grant or funding stream that supports "this staff" to do "this thing" but it doesn't support "this staff" to do "something else". So it's a variety of services and programs. Mr. Petrie feels that it is the community based organizations, rather than governmental, who have the best experience of actually working with the veteran from a holistic perspective and who are in a better position to better articulate where these "pinch points" are.

Mr. Petrie then asks Mr. Cameron and Mr. Boylan if they would be in a position to help demonstrate in some form how challenging and difficult it is to put these pieces together from the aspects of marshalling around the full array of services around the need of the veteran. Mr. Boylan states that they would, explaining that organizations like his, Swords to Plowshares, strive toward that wraparound service, continuum of care, holistic approach to veteran service. Mr. Boylan echoes Mr. Cameron in regards to funding. He says that as a group they regularly try to identify how to interact with the local community and find the gaps (in funding) and try to bridge those gaps.

Mr. Petrie asks, "At the end of the day, what do we have that is tangible that might give us some particular plan of action or activity other than talk?" He



speaks to everyone; Maybe by taking a look at the multitude of federal programs and mapping where they're complimentary and where they contradict, with the end game effort being that the policy makers, whether we do this at the federal level or the state level or the local level, and then to make some kind of presentation to policy makers with a hoped for expectation that there will be legislative fixes that mitigate the barriers. Mr. Boylan agrees that this is a possibility.

Mr. Cameron says there is an option to going back and effectively auditing all these programs in order to understand and examine and to look at deficiencies, that is to start talking about an old concept, a block grant where you provide states resources to address all these needs through a block grant process. And you set up a set of criteria, insist on broad criteria in terms of service and client eligibility and set specific criteria for entities that can provide those services. Recognizing there needs to be a standard of care and performance requirements. I don't mean just quantifiable objectives, cultural competency is very important. Mr. Cameron suggests appealing to the feds/state to bring all these programs under one roof in the house and allow all the communities to go to this resource to serve the veterans in their communities. He thinks it would make it more efficient.

Mr. Petrie tells members the House Committee on Education and Workforce is looking at Workforce Investment Act (WIA) reauthorization as a new Bill, House Bill HR 4297 called Workforce Investment Improvement Act. It does exactly what Mr. Cameron suggests. It consolidates funding from 27 national and state administrative workforce programs including Workforce Investment Act (WIA), Dislocated worker, Youth, Job Corps, Wagner-Peyser (W-P), and the Job for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) in addition to others. It does turn it into a block grant, eliminating all those legislative mandates and block grants down to local service delivery.

Mr. Petrie asks the members; Are we trying to do an either or proposition? Do we want to support existing legislation and amend existing legislation or participate in the conversation like the conversation around the Workforce Investment Improvement Act, potentially giving recommendations? Or, are we trying to say, we got this matrix that represents a plethora of state, federal, local legislation and here's all the inherent conflicts in this stuff and then give it to the policymakers and say, "hey do something about this"? Mr. Cameron feels that if HR 4297 consolidates and makes more the workforce areas more coherent it should definitely be a specific recommendation of this workgroup. He feels it's a little early but legislation at the state level or a resolution at the state level should support this idea.

From a tangible aspect *what is it around coherent alignment of state, federal and local programs, what is it we would like to come out of this group?* Do we want to support legislation, not support legislation, tell them to write a whole new piece of legislation? What's the end game on this issue that we



think we need to do? We have to come to some agreement so that we end up offering more than the minutes of our meetings and a narrative of our discussions.

Mr. Petrie asks: "Is there a consensus opinion/agreement that the concepts that Peter discussed, moving away from categorical programs and categorical legislation, and moving more into block grants, from a policy standpoint is that going to be recommendation of this group, at every level; federal, state, local that they move away from categorical funding and categorical legislation and look more around consolidation and block granting. Don't prescribe processes to everybody, describe outcomes you're looking for. Consolidate these programs, get the money out to us and let us figure out how to do this and only judge us and measure us based on whether we're achieving the outcome or not achieving the outcome. Mr. Cameron agreed. Mr. Petrie continued by saying, I challenge everyone to ask themselves, "what is the best thing for veterans regardless of what does my specific position in government requires me to do around a specific grant or a specific program". At some point I want something to come out of this group that we can have action steps around.

Mr. Petrie's comments open a discussion of looking at gap analysis and integrated service delivery issues. He suggests doing an environmental map, looking at the programs and what it does and how staff is used within these programs. To get a policy change we need to make a good case. Do we want to pursue an environmental scan mapping from a systems perspective and show the barriers, do that to help us make the premise?

Ms. Marguerite Womack agrees that there should be an environmental scan because sometimes you find out that something is already being done. It should be done timely so that it is effective. Other members agree with that concept and elaborate on reviewing the scan for gaps in services. Mr. Petrie feels they can probably build on what things have already been done by consolidating them. Ms. Alford-Williams suggests that the information from a scan may also give the option of augmenting funds to another program that is up and running like the Veteran Service Organizations so they can provide the services, rather than a new program.

The discussion continued with members offering their input about the group producing a product that would be timely, effective and could continue to be kept updated, as in an online "resource guide". All members agreed that a printed guide is not as effective as a living, organic resource. As an alternative to a resource guide the working group also discusses a system modeled after the

2-1-1 San Diego. It is suggested to access something like that, meeting with them and looking at their strategies and perhaps expanding what they're doing statewide. Mr. Boylan states that he has seen many resource guides but has never seen anything as effective as 2-1-1.

Mr. Petrie summarizes the discussion of coherent alignment.

- 1) Doing an environmental scan with a gap analysis that helps us from the standpoint of dealing with policymakers, articulating what the gaps are and what policymaker's roles are to mitigate those barriers and those gaps.
- 2) The other thing I heard is looking at a non-static electronic repository of resources that is available to the veterans but not only available to the veteran as a self help tool but is also available to the multitude of practitioners and the human services professionals that serve veterans. So there's a tool for them to better understand and have at their fingertips what resources they and their clients can tap into to meet their needs if they're veterans who may not yet be ready to be in the pipeline of job seekers.
- 3) After we do our own gap analysis, from that we should be able to draw from that a list of recommendations that we would bring forth to policymakers.

Mr. Petrie asked if anyone had any comments. Are we moving toward agreement that this is our closest deliverable in utilizing and not reinventing the wheel? But when we do this gap analysis pick up on the products that have already been developed, like the budget projects, the association of veteran services organizations and the matrix that we initiated in the early stages of the ICV.

**Improved Labor Exchange:** The members were asked to review a list of websites sent by Ms. Wall but no comments had been received prior to this meeting. It came to light that a few members had reviewed some of the sites and they imparted their impressions of an employer looking for a specific category of technician in CalJOBS to the lack of ability to enter a veteran's Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) to assist the veteran in finding comparable job skills in a civilian environment. The conclusion is that each website had some pluses and minuses and Mr. Petrie asked Ms. Wall to resend the list and the discussion would continue at the next meeting.

Mr. Petrie and Mr. McMahon had been requested to speak with the vendor, Geo Solutions, regarding additional enhancements to the new CalJOBS that would be beneficial to veterans. Because of pending deadlines with EDD's new system it was not possible to ascertain information. This issue will be revisited at a later date.



#### 4. FOLLOW-UP ON PREVIOUS TASKS/QUESTIONS

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Petrie also requested members bring up any comments, questions or updates from previous meetings or items not on this agenda.

Previously Mr. Petrie had told the members of a potential Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Employment Development Department and the Sacramento Area Human Resources Association (SAHRA) as it pertains to large corporations offering to employ large amounts of veterans. He used the example of Chase Bank and their program/goal of hiring 100,000 veterans. When a CEO of a corporation announces that they are creating a program to hire veterans, how does this trickle down to the Human Resources area of an organization so that the program can actually be implemented? Mr. Petrie told the working group that SAHRA has contacted him to move forward with the MOU. Mr. Petrie suggests that an MOU signing could be part of the one year anniversary of the Executive Order.

Mr. Petrie asks Mr. Eric Worthen to share his vision and the process for us to pursue to identify those potential deliverables. Mr. Worthen tells the group he wants to put out a plan so that any organization that wants to help veterans in any of the four areas that we cover can pick up our plan, can see the need, get a background on the need and have a list of effective solutions which we have identified and then they could use the plan as their starting point on how to help veterans in any particular area. The "report" would give a background on the overall universe that vets are encountering. Then there would be specific background related to just the veteran's employment issue and how veterans are accessing or not accessing employment opportunities. That's why we've come up with these needs and priorities so now that we've prioritized the specific needs, we have enumerated about 5-6. Now we're in the process of identifying the solutions. The needs will be matched with the solutions in the document. Finally, you'll be able to read about the need, get a background on the need and then you can see the specific solutions that have been presented by this group. Afterwards we'll go back and add matrix and the best way to measure the effectiveness of those solutions.

#### 5. PUBLIC COMMENTS

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Petrie requested further comments from members of the meeting group and none were received. Mr. Petrie then requested that if any members of the public were in attendance and had any comments to bring them forward at this time. No members of the public were in attendance.

**6. FUTURE MEETINGS AND DATES TO REMEMBER**

**DISCUSSION:** A meeting in July will be scheduled but no date was set at this meeting.

**7. ADJOURNMENT**

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Petrie called for final public comment and then asked for approval to adjourn the June 21, 2012, meeting. Mr. Petrie adjourned the Employment Working Group meeting at 3:50 p.m..